

Abstract of the Disclosure

The invention provides a system for entry and modification of multimedia elements for communication and presentation. Abbreviations, each comprising a sequence of one or more keystrokes or mouse actions are associated with individual multimedia elements, so that a human operator can enter those multimedia elements using a keyboard or mouse. Each multimedia element has properties, which can be modified once the multimedia element has been entered. The set of individual multimedia elements is collected into an ensemble, which can itself have properties that can be modified. One such property of the ensemble is a “theme,” which applies to a plurality of multimedia elements in the ensemble and presents a variant of each multimedia element consistent with the theme. The multimedia editor is included with a communication system for sending and receiving electronic chat and electronic mail messages in real time, and for presenting web documents in a compressed form. When a sender enters an abbreviation, an associated multimedia element is transmitted as an electronic chat message or constructed for transmission as an electronic mail message; the choice of associated multimedia element can be responsive to a receiver’s capability, and can be selected at the receiver dynamically in response to user actions. The sender can also transmit a theme; multimedia objects are presented to the recipient using the sender’s theme, or can be overridden to use a different theme. If the multimedia objects associated with the abbreviations are available at the recipient or at a common server, electronic chat messages, elec-

- 1 tronic mail messages, and web documents can be compressed and transmitted using only
- 2 the abbreviations.